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EXPONENT OF AHMADIYYA ISLAM AND OF ITS WORLD-WIDE REVIVALISTIC ACTIVITIES

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Khalifatul Masih III

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

MONTHLY

TAHRIK-i-JADID

RABWAH

Vol. XV—No. 8

August, 1979

Editor

NUR-UD-DIN MUNEER M.A.

GOD IN ISLAM

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By

Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad M.A.

(May God be pleased with him)

"GOD IN ISLAM" is the English Version of "ہمارا خدا", in which the author, besides showing the hollowness of Godless philosophies, has given cogent proofs of the existence of God and also described His attributes and characteristics. It is serially being published in the "Tahriki Jadid" for the benefit of its readers. English rendering is by Qazi M. Aslam.

(Ed.)

(Continued from last issue)

How to Seek God

I now proceed to describe briefly how to order our inquiry about God. If we seek to know something, we must know the method by which we can know it. Unless our method is proper we cannot hope to succeed. We can only be indulging in a futile exercise. When we want to bore a hole in the ground to reach water underneath, we have to spend some time over selecting the site. After selecting the site we will have to see that our boring takes the correct direction. It will have to be strictly perpendicular to the level of the ground. Unless we do

so we will never reach the water we seek. If our method is wrong we cannot reach the end we want to reach. If we complain, our complaint will be useless. In the ordinary work-a-day world we find everything achieved has a proper method by which it is achieved. Other methods do not work. Same is true in the spiritual world. In the spiritual world also we have ends to achieve and these ends have their appropriate methods. Without the appropriate methods, our labour is wasted. This is the law which holds true both in the natural and the spiritual world. And the law is for our own benefit. For unless there is such a law progress in either world, is impossible. It may be progress in knowledge, or progress in applications of knowledge. You have only to think what would happen if there were no such law. No proper methods by which results can be achieved. Wishes would then become achievements. With what result? It will be a world peopled by men ignorant and lazy, who have not known the joy of hard work. Who would wish to live in such world? Do we not discriminate between a man of knowledge and a man of ignorance? A man who is hard working- and a man who is lazy? A man who has achieved the skill and expertise by patient endeavour and a man who remains unskilled and clumsy? Where shall we find men with trained minds and trained hands. This world in which you see progress and advancement of every kind, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual, will disappear. Progress and advancement, skill and expertise are fruits of the law under which our life is lived. If there are ends to be achieved they can be achieved only by certain methods. If you dont't have such a law, human progress will end, human brain will become an insensitive stone. Where will man be in such a world? What status, what importance will he have relatively to other living beings. The law of effort, of proper effort, is a law full of meaning. It is not something that obstructs your onward progress. It is wings to enable you to scale heights of knowledge, and produce men with trained minds and muscles.

Question of Motives

The first thing to know is that the first essential in an undertaking is the clarification of the motives which lie behind. Why do we want to unndertake something? We should be quite clear about it. Different motives may give a different character and colour to the same under-

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taking. The total consequences are also very different. Motives and intentions therefore, are very important in all undertakings. The difference is real, not imaginary. Here is a man who obeys his superior officer only or largely because as a subordinate he must. In the undertaking itself he has no conviction or concern. Nor has he any regard for the officer, nor is he impressed by the superior ability and character of that officer. His participation in the assignment is only out of formal regard for the routine duties of administration, the habit of carrying out prescribed duties. The resulting activity is without any personal involvement and attachment. But think of what will be the case if this subordinate has personal regard for his officer and is impressed by his superior skill and ability and is also convinced that the work assigned to him is important. In that case the quality of the resulting activity will be quite different. The whole style of work will change. A personal involvement will be visible. This difference in the quality and style of work will follow from difference in motivation. The same assignment will acquire a different quality. Superficially there is no difference but deep down the difference is great.

What we have said applies to our methods of seeking knowledge and awareness of God. The philosopher seeks this knowledge. So does a lover of God, a toiler in His way. Both set out to find what is God like? But how different are the motives! The philosopher's motive is sheer understanding. He is interested in understanding the world before him. What is it all about? How did it originate? Did it have a Maker or not? He thinks and thinks and comes to some conclusion. This conclusion he adds to the list of other conclusions which he has arrived at in the course of philosophising. He is not intersted in anything further. For instance if there is God, what sort of character does He have ? How does He deal with His creatures, the men and women He has created? Are His dealings with His creatures just and fair and praiseworthy? The philosopher is not interested in these further questions. He is only interested in questions of fact. Is there a Creator-God? No more. The question of relating himself to a Creator-God does not arise in the philosopher's mind. There is not seeking, and no toiling on his part. As soon as the questions of fact have been answered, the philosopher's quest is over. The case of a lover of God is quite different. He is in quest of a Being to Whom he can attach himself. In fact he is restless about it. He seeks not awareness only but knowledge of what this

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Creator-God expects of his creatures. His ambition is to please his God, to order his life in accordance with His wishes. Therefore his quest is different, very different from the quest of the philosopher. Therefore before we undertake to inquire about God, we should define and clarify to ourselves why, with what intent, do we wish to make this inquiry. Is it with the motive of a philosohper, or with the motive of a toiler, seeker? By rights it should be as a toiler and a seeker that we should set out to inquire about God. Think of the baby who is seeking his mother's breast. If the baby approaches the mother with a philosopher's attitude, seeking knowledge of what the mother's breast can give, he will fall in his quest. But if the baby is compelled by hunger and cries for the mother's breast, the reponse of the mother will be ready and irresistible. Milk will begin to flow ready to feed the baby and save him from the pangs of hunger.

No wonder, therefore, God does not *appear* to the philosopher. He does not want to play the role of an object of curiosity, not a toy the philosopher wants to play with. But when it is a toiler who calls on God, the response of God is quite different. God is loved and is moved by love. He is loyal and is moved by loyalty. Where the quest is honest and real it is bound to meet with a response which is ready and real. The philosopher and the toiler both seek God. The philosopher succeeds in making God more and more remote. The toiler finds God running to meet him.

Therefore my dear friends, my young friends, if you want to inquire about God, do not assume the attitude of the philosopher. This is not the way to find God. The method in any case is useless. For, our interest is in sheer knowing or understanding. There is nothing further we have in mind after we have discovered God by reasoning. In fact there is nothing further we want to do. What use is it to set out and inquire? Mere understanding and knowing whether God exists or not, will not take us very far. What difference will it make to our lives? We should be ready from the very beginning that if we come to know God, we will go further and attach ourselves to Him to earn His love. Without such intent we cannot claim the right to know God. We can be accused of half-heartedness, of seeking something for which we have not much use. To persons who approach God with this attitude, God does not reveal Himself. But if our curiosity is real, if we are impatient

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or restless, if we seek nearness to Him, if we want to enter into a relationship of love with Him, if we pursue Him with such aspirations, then we will find God responding and running towards us to meet us. Well has the Messiah of Islam depicted this situation:

No path is easier
than the path of love to reach God;
Woods and wildernesses
they cross without much ado,
whose quest is real, true.

This is the path, this the only
path
to reach God, my friends.
This the alchemy
which yields heaps of gold.

The arrows misses not —
if it is the arrow of love
Falter not therefore my archers,
falter not at all

This is the fire,
that will save you from the
Great fire —
this is the stream that will —
Take you to a thousand other springs.

On this path will God
meet you half—way—and
greeted will you be with garlands
of knowledge,
and vision Divine.
Also,

The philosopher is mad who
seeks only by reason:
Far away from reasoning
is the true path to Thee.

The philosopher's quest is dry as dust. It aims not beyond under-

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standing. Really to *know* God is to love Him and to be related to Him. This is the way of true lovers motivated by genuine quest.

I shall now point out that we are in a strange situation God is remote from our senses, from our eyes, subtle, secret, limitless. To believe in such a God, we need some basis, a basis which would lend conviction, of the same degree as we have of objects in the external world.

This is a difficult situation. But God helps us out of it. He has ordained that man should take a few steps towards knowing Him, and after we have taken a few steps God Himself approaches man. He descends on man's heart and raises him to Himself. In one word belief in God comes in two stages. One stage is covered by man by his reasoning. The other stage transcends reasoning. Reasoning is of no use now. At this stage help comes from God in the form of signs of special experiences. When reasoning and special experience combine, we have the quality of belief which we are seeking. The subject is described in a pithy verse in the Holy Quran (6 : 104). Amply paraphrased it says :

> The physical senses of man, eyes, ears, even his understanding are unable to reach God, to acquire full awareness of His existence and His Being and character. Therefore, God has arranged that He Himself should move to the border of human awareness. He provides signs and experiences which make it easy for man to acquire the awareness which he seeks. True, God is subtler than anything we know, therefore outside the limits of our vision. But while God is subtle He is also aware of the limitations and the needs of man. God knows that the spiritual life of man can not fulfil itself without special spiritual experiences ; therefore God Himself arranges that man should have the experiences which are a necessary supplement to reasoning about God.

In this little verse two attributes of God are underlined : *Latif* and *Khabir*. *Latif* which we translate as *subtle* is complementary to the words "physical senses cannot reach him". The intention of the verse is to remind man that mere reasoning is not enough. This because God is subtle, the attribute *Khabir* which we have translated as *aware* is added to the words "He Himself reaches the human senses". God knows the limitation of man. Therefore, He arranges for signs and experiences which complete man's belief in God. From two attributes of God, *Latif* (Subtle) and *Khabir* (Aware) flow two matters of fact, viz., God's

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inaccessibility, and His concern that man should yet know Him.

In short the Holy Quran keeps pointing out that reasoning is not enough. Our senses cannot reach God. At the same time the Holy Quran keeps reminding us that we should ponder over this universe, this limitless creation, the heavens and the earth and all the things which are between them. We are required to view all again and again. We are required to think on everything that lies before us and then judge whether all that lies before us with all the wisdom and design which it holds can have come into being by itself. No, no. On the contrary this vast universe with all that it contains and means, proclaims loudly that it must have had a Creator. The Holy Quran is concerned to urge man to think and think and thus try to reach God. Upto this point reasoning can help without heavenly help. This should not be understood as a negation of what is said in the first part of the verse (*human senses cannot reach God*). There is no contradiction. Human reasoning can bring us some knowledge of God. It is also true that human reasoning unaided by divine signs cannot achieve full knowledge of God.

It follows that belief in God is really built up in two stages. The first stage we owe to unaided reason, the second we owe to signs and experiences which God Himself provides. It is when the second stage arises that we really arrive at belief. The first stage stimulates our curiosity. We begin to feel and to accept that there should be a Sovereign-Creator presiding over the whole world, that this world is not the result of a chance event. The second stage brings up the conviction that God really is and that He has this and that attribute.

We can see clearly these two stages of belief. Reasoning alone cannot yield existencial certainty which amounts to saying that reasoning by itself cannot bring us the faith we seek. It can pave the way for faith. It cannot show the face of God to us, It cannot bring about a contact, a meeting between us and our God. It can only open the way to it. It cannot bring us the peace and satisfaction which are the qualities of full faith.

It can produce a zest for inquiry. It can produce an expectancy of finding God, When reasoning has done its utmost, we have to stop. For, going beyond is impossible, because of the subtlety and inacessibility

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of God. Going beyond is possible, however, when God Himself helps us to a new vision. With this new vision the mist that intervenes between us and God disappears. The vision which man could not have access to before and had to return unrequited is now able to reach God and focus itself on the refulgent divine face. The nearer He approaches the more transparent the vision becomes. How near and how close man can reach God, has no limits. Awareness of God goes on deepening. God is limitless, infinite; therefore, there is no knowing when our awareness of Him can reach its terminus. The prayer 'My Lord increase me in knowledge' remains relevant for ever, for common men as well as for the greatest of them, as indeed the Holy Prophet, the Crown of Creation, the Sovereign—Prophet among Prophets (on whom be peace) was. How true all this. The Holy Prophet said "I am the best and the greatest among the children of Adam, but I take no pride". In the Holy Quran we are told that the Holy Prophet drew so near to God that he became 'one chord between two bows, or closer still' (53 : 9-10). Yet even the Holy Prophet needed to pray for more and more knowledge of God to come closer and closer still to Him. 'Oh God send peace on Muhammad and on true followers of Muhammad, bless them all and give them peace'.

It is unfortunate that many or most people who have achieved only the first stage of faith begin to think that they have achieved full faith. The truth is that a great majority of those who think of God, achieve only a degree of expectancy that God probably does exist. Having reached this stage they begin to think that they have come to the end of the quest. Now it is true that expectancy is a measure of achievement but it remains only a step towards full achievement. The first feeling of awareness of the existence of God is just this expectancy. Those who treat this first awareness as full awareness are liable to stumble. The slightest shock to this expectancy sometimes results in ruining the faith which they have only begun to achieve. Many who achieve the first degree of faith by reasoning begin to waver. Not finding reason a source of full conviction they begin to turn back and end up by rejecting God. It is as a man who confronts a room with a door bolted from inside. How could the door be bolted from inside? He waits for the door to open and for the inmate to come out. He even knocks at it and cries aloud for the door to open, but the door does not open, nor does any voice arise from inside in reply to his knocking. Then naturally

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this man begins to doubt whether there is any living person inside the room. Maybe there was but he is no more now. Through some mysterious accident the door has become bolted from inside. The man outside will become completely disappointed and turn away thinking no more that there is any living person in the room.

So it is with God. , If we stop short at the stage of expectancy and do not proceed from expectancy to certainty then we are liable to lose heart and to lose faith. Those who are in the habit of thinking will not stop at the stage of expectancy. They will go forward, go beyond expactancy. If they succeed, well and good. If they don't they fall back again into unbelief. Unfortunately it so happens that most people stop short at the stage of expectancy. They do not make further effort that is required. They persuade themselves that they have achieved full faith. They forget that awareness of God has no ends. Having learnt to expect that God exists, they do not pursue the quest further, so as to become certain that He does really exist. They show no eagerness to know what kind of being God really is and how does He deal with His creatures. Or how can we know that He responds to our quest. Such men fail to go forward. Nor do they move backward. They are satisfied with a partial faith deluded that they have reached full faith.

Much or most of what passes for belief in God is of this kind. Woe to man ! Reasoning helps him to approach God and achieve a degree of faith. The feeble light of reasoning does this. But the refulgent rays of a full view do not attract him. His approach begins to slow down. He chooses to cut down his journey and his quest and to sit aside. He shows no concern for the full conviction or the certainty which awaits him at the end of the journey and for which his inner nature has fitted him. He misses the warmth of close contact. He deceives himself and possibly deceives others, not knowing that a half-hearted quest for God is no quest.

— II —

Rational Arguments for the Existence of God

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A Safe Approach Necessry

I turn now to give a brief account of some rational arguments which point to the existence of God. As I have made it clear already,

arguments of this kind yield only a probability that God exists. To go from probability to a degree of certainty we need other arguments. These, God willing, will be presented in their place.

As a prelude to the rational arguments which I now propose to describe I wish to present an argument which is more an example of safe thinking. Everybody knows there is such a thing as playing safe. There may be no evident basis for choosing to do something, but still we choose to do it, only as a matter of safety. Suppose we are obliged for some reason to spend a night in the wilderness of a jungle. We know and feel sure there is no danger in a part of the jungle. No danger of robbers or wild beasts. Nevertheless, we make arrangements for keeping watch at night. No apparent danger, we yet take precautions. For, may be an unexpected sitiuation arises making the precaution appropriate. Our reasoning is ; 'If no danger arises the extra safety steps we take will do no harm, but if a danger does arise our safety steps will stand us in good stead. In short, very often we do things for which we cannot point to a good enough reason, but which nevertheless are undertaken by us, — it is safe to do so. Playing safe is considered good and reasonable by all people, everywhere. It is wise and useful.

Consider the question of the existence of God in the light of this safety rule. We have no difficulty in seeing that to believe in God is in any case better and safer. For, if God does not exist, and this vast universe is all a matter of accident (or accidents), it will do us no harm if nevertheless we believe that He does. If, on the other hand, God does really exist, then our behaviour is appropriate, true, and useful. Only two answers are possible .Either that this world came to be, and now carries on by itself, belief in God being (God forbid) a false belief. Or, that this world had a Creator, a Master who brought it all into being and Who now maintains it, in accordance with His will and wish. A third alternative on this point does not exist. If we refuse to believe, the possiblity that God exists incurs dangerous consequences for us. If, on the other hand, we choose to believe, then the possibility that God exists, incurs no dangerous consequences for us. 'O ye two groups, only one of you is at peace, if ye but knew'. Think for a while - who has more chance to be at peace ? Those who choose to believe or those who choose not to believe ? To believe is the way of safety. It incurs no dangerous consequences. Not to believe entails possibility of loss or liabilities of different kinds. And this

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is just the point.

It is said about Hazrat Ali (God be pleased with him) that some one asked him what proof there was of God. Hazrat Ali gave him this very answer. Why go into abstruse argumentation. If there is no God, believers and unbelievers are alike—they incur no loss or liability. But if there is God, then remember the denier runs great risks. The man who put the question was satisfied and went away. It is simple enough. If there is no God, we can yet believe there is. What is the harm? What restraints or restrictions do we have to impose on ouerselves as believers which we do not as unbelievers? Major sins or lapses like adultery, murder, theft, robbery, lying, cheating, and so on, are what believers in God guard against. These are evils which your own nature, your better judgment also wish to guard against. The law and the state you live under are concerned to do the same. What do you lose or fail to achieve when you beoome a believer. There is nothing your belief keeps you from, nothing you consider right and reasonable to indulge in. Eat and drink with moderation, work and play, and pursue your businesses and professions. Have your decent and clean pleasures, your friendships, enjoy your family life, the company of children. Believing in God will not stop you from any of these activities. What believing will stop you from are activities harmful to you personally or to others. To restrain yourself from such activities is a matter of your own conscience, your own judgment of things. Or, they are prohibitions prescrided by the community at large or by the law of the land in which you live. So by believing in God you lose nothing. Why not believe, then? If, as may happen, you begin to say, God must be proved before you can be asked to believe in Him, our reply is 'Believe like so many other things you believe in proof of which you don't have and do not care to have, when believing brings so many advantages, and nearly no disadvantage, when refusing to believe has no advantages, is likely on the other hand, to bring some disadvantage. This being so, you can see which way wisdom and good sense seem to point. It is true, deniers of God deny Him, because they think they have no proof of His existence, not because, they think they have proof of His non-existence. The way of caution, of safe thinking, therefore, is to opt for believing. This way lies peace. In short, in case there is no God, believers and unbelievers stand alike. Believers lose nothing by believing. If God exists, believers

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stand to gain, unbelievers can see what they are in for.

If the doubt is raised What use is believing when believing is just safe, but has no basis in fact, our answer is - True, such believing is not believing in the full sense of the term, but is still better than not believing at all. Tentative belief, belief with reservations, keeps a man's mind thinking on the subject of God. Maybe, he will begin to perceive aspects of the subject he did not perceive before. Maybe he will come to acquire real faith, his tentative belief becoming a first step towards full belief. Also, tentative belief can stimulate a person now and then to moral activities of one sort or another. Tentative belief, however tentative, is yet better than no belief at all. Such belief can cover also the safe thinking of which we have been talking. Safe thinking has its rewards same as any honest effort at thinking. *(To be continued)*

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The Holy Quran with English Translation Published by the Ahmadiyya Movement Ghana

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In a ceremony held on May 25th 1979 in Accra, Ghana, the Amir and the Missionary Incharge of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam Ghana branch introduced the first English Translation of the Holy Quran to be printed in Ghana. This remarkable achievement of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission Ghana gained wide publicity in the country by the news media. We reproduce the news published in Weekly Spectator of Saturday June 2, 1979 as below :

Holy Quran Launched

"The First Holy Quran with English translation to be printed in Ghana has been officially launched in Accra. Launching the Muslim Holy Scripture at the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Accra last week, Maulvi A. Wahab Adam, Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Ghana, said the printing of the Holy Quran locally was intended not only to fulfil a long felt spiritual need of making the Holy Quran accessible to "every seeker after truth" in Ghana, but will also save the country the foreign exchange that would otherwise have to be spent on its importation from abroad. Maulvi Adam expressed gratitude to Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad Khalifatul Masih III, without whose permission and assistance the Holy Quran could not have printed locally.

He also praised the Ghana Publishing Corporation for the superb printing work done, which he described as meeting every international printing standard and an achievement for which the corporation can be justifiably proud.

Ten thousand copies of the Holy Quran has been printed, and more copies will be printed as and when the need arises. A copy of the Holy Quran will sell at C. 15.00.

A reception was later held at the Palm Court Accra, to round off the launching ceremony. Among the distinguished personalities present on the occasion were Mr. *S.A.A. Djoleto* Executive Director of Ghana Book Development Council, Rev. Lefirink of the Catholic Secretariat, Rev. Osei Akoanor, a Producer/director for religious programmes on

GBC Television and minister of the Methodist Church and officials from the Malian Embassy."

Remarks by S.A.A. Djoleto, Executive Director Ghana Book Development Council

Gentlemen,

As you have just been told by Maulvi A. Wahab Adam, Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Ghana, I represent the Commissioner for Education and Culture, Dr. E. Evans - Anfom, at this function. In view of the commitments in connection with the visit of the Nigerian Head of State, it is not possible for the Commissioner to be with you here on this happy occasion of the launching of the first, ever, Holy Quran with English translation printed in Ghana. I am to convey his best wishes and congratulations to you.

This splendid production of the Holy Quran here is a praiseworthy accomplishment of your Movement. It is also, I believe, an achievement that should make proud all those in Ghana and Africa who value the Book as a tool of intellectual, cultural and spiritual upliftment. In this connection it is fitting to congratulate the Ghana Publishing Corporation for its fine production of this important document.

The Ghana Book Development Council is naturally happy that you have taken the initiative to bring this holy book within easy reach of your members It accordingly urges all members and the general reader, too, to study it with care.

Finally, I would want to add my own congratulations to those of the Commissioner, the Ghana Book Development Council and the nation. Thank you.

BRIEF REPORT

29th Majlis Mushawarat Jamaat Ahmadiyya Indonesia.

The opening of the Majlis Mushawarat of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Indonesia took place at Padang, at the convention Hall "BAGINDO AZIZ KHAN" on Tuseday, 10th April, 1979 at 8.15 p.m.

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Ahmadiyya Takes Islam to the Ends of the World

The meeting was attended by 224 representatives of 45 branches of Jamaat Ahmadiyya in Indonesia. Six hundred visitors also observed the event.

Among others were present the Governor of West Sumatra, Chairman of the Province Parliament and the MUSPIDA (the joined element of Local Authorities for west Snmatra).

The Chairman of the Committee in his inaugural speech appreciated sincerely the attention of the representatives. The Chairman of the Committee then handed over the leadership of the Mushawarat to the Chairman of the Jamaat Ahmadiyya Indonesia Mr. Moertolo, who expressed his sincere thanks towards the government. In his prayers he prayed for the Government for Divine blessings and guidance. Then the Vice Chairman of the Jamaat read the messages of Imam Jamaat Ahmadiyya Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III and Vakiluttabshir.

The Governor of Sumatra and the Chairman of the Province addressed the meeting in general. In his address, the Governor hoped that the Jamaat Ahmadiyya in this Mushawarat would able to produce new effect for all of us. The Chairman of the Province Parliament said : The Jamaat Ahmadiyya Indonesia has been taking high momentum for starting this Mushawarat just at the same moment when the Indonesians are entering the third REPELITA. (The Third five years plan of National Development).

Finally the Raisuttabligh of the Jamaat Ahmadiyya Indonesia Mr. Mahmood Ahmad Cheema, offered sincere thanks towards the local authorities and the Central Government who have issued permission to hold this meeting at Pandang. The purpose of the Conference is to endeavour and to look after the Jamaat in accordance with the teachings of Islam and to improve ourselves and how we could attain the efficient way to promote the cause of Islam throughout the world.

The session ended with collective silent prayers.

Ashanti & Brong Ahafo Regional Conferences

For the purpose of administration, Jamaat Ahmadiyya Ghana is divided into nine regions. All the regions hold their annual conference

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and this occasion is always marked with special zeal and vigor of the members of the Jamaat.

In the month of May 1979 the annual conference of Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions were held successfully. In the following we give the excerpts from the speech delivered by the guest speaker Mr. G. O. Annam, who represented the Director of Education, Brang Ahafo at the occasion of the Annual Conference of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam Brong Ahafo Region in Ghana.

"The Ahmadiyya Movement in Ghana started 56 years ago. That does not mean that Islam was unknown here before 1920. On the contrary, the Islamic faith has been in this country from the begining, especially in Northern Ghana. I would say that the advent of the Ahmadiyya Movement gave this country the first contact with an enlightened form of Islam. For the Ahmadiyya Movement pursues a system of distinctive characteristics from India and Pakistan. What puzzles one is that orthodox Muslims are slow, if not unwilling, to accept that they can be guided and enlightened by this burning torch of Islam, at least in the field of formal education and Health programmes.

What wins my admiration, Mr. Chairman, is that, quite apart from propagating the Islamic concept and faith, the Ahmadiyya Movement pursues an educational programme on the sound principle that Allah's worshippers have a right to sound health and a duty to contribute to nation building. And I submit that a soul will be more devoted to the worship of Allah when it is healthy and enlightened, For, I categorically refute the notion that what Allah wants of the human race is blind and sick worshippers. And I feel I have the Ahmadiyya Movement on my side in this regard.

For example, the Ahmadiyya Movement has been demonstrating that theology and faith cannot be the exclusive objective of and formal education and upbringing of children and the youth ; but that formal educational programme must also produce men and women sufficiently equipped to take up key positions in running the country.....The emphasis is on men and women making their meaningful contribution to the task of shaping and maintaining the nation each according to his or her proven ability and aptitude. I stand to correction, Mr. Chairman.

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Ahmadiyya takes Islam to the Ends of the World

Beginning with an elementary school at Saltpond in 1923, nearly 56 years ago, the Ahmadiyya movement today operate schools almost everywhere in Ghana, to the extent that it now numbers among the denominational Management Units of Education here. This gigantic achievement cannot have been affected without able and dynamic leadership at its height. Ahmadiyya Secondary School in Kumasi stands out as one of the Monumental feats of the Movement in the short span of 56 years. But more beyond. Where other religious bodies have shown reluctance to make any move today, the Ahmadiyya Movement has ventured on a daring enterprise, operating six private Secondary Schools across the country from its meagre resources, Salaga and Gomoa being among the number. If anything, this is commendable undertaking of voluntary support of Government's efforts to provide school opportunities for every child in Ghana.

Still more beyond. As at now the Movement is operating as many as four private hospitals in Ghana, thus beating in 56 years any record the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches can boast of in this field of health in one hundred whole years.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot, in the light of these achievements, be called as a flatterer when I declare all this as no mean achievement by your Movement.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen, today is a day for the Ahmadiyya Movement and its congregations in the Brong Ahafo Region. I think you have every right to be proud of your Movement. I am of the opinion that you belong to a progressive Movement. We do not only feel at home in your midst, we are in fact proud of you and we appreciate what your Movement stands for. That is why we are present here in our numbers.

May the Ahmadiyya Movement prosper in Ghana, especially in Brong Ahafo Region. May the faith grow and spread by leaps and bounds. May your congregations in this region multiply and wax strong in their faith in Allah.

Thank you for the honour of requesting me to address this august Conference."

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FAZLE UMAR FOUNDATION

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An Important Announcement

For the Year 1359 H.S. (1980 A.D.)

Annual Prizes of Rupees Seven Thousand Five Hundred for Literary Works

At the Annual Gathering of 1949, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (may God be pleased with him) laid before the Community a comprehensive scheme regarding the Ahmadiyya Publications. To implement this scheme, the Fazle Umar Foundation has fixed five prizes of Rs. 1500/- each. These prizes are awarded for works which fall under any one of the following broad categories of topics :

First Prize :

The basic tenets of Islam, e.g. God's existence, Divine attributes, the need of Prophethood, criteria for the recognition of the Prophets, Prayer, Fate, life after death, Paradise and Hell, Miracles, the need of Shariat (Religious Law), and life of the Holy Prophet.

Second Prize :

On any aspect of Islamic forms of worship and Islamic moral ethics.

Third Prize :

History of Religion ; history of former prophets ; history of Islam ; history of propagation of Islam in any country, history of the Ahmadiyya Movement ; Life-story and character sketch of any companion of the Holy Prophet or any Hero of Islam etc.

Fourth Prize :

Islamic Economics, e.g. Banking and Interest ; System of Insurance ; Labour and related questions ; Organisation of Trading Companies ; Industry ; International Commerce (N.B. Aside from throwing light on these subjects from the Islamic point of view, the discussion must include comparison with the existing system) ; Research by Muslims in any branch of knowledge and their contribution to its development.

Fifth Prize :

Any literary topic not included in the above-mentioned categories of titles.

RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. These Prizes will be awarded annually. For this purpose, a year will be reckoned as from 1st January to 31 December.

2. Only those manuscripts will be included in the competition which are received in the Office of the Fazle Umar Foundation on or before 1st November in any year. Exception to this condition may be allowed under special circumstances.

3. It is important that the manuscript is original and unpublished.

4. The manuscript shall not be less than 20,000 words (*a*) Two bound copies of the draft shall be submitted, whilst submitting his article, the entrant should state clearly the category of the Prize (First, Second, etc) under which the entry falls. (*b*) The author should submit an outline of his thesis before undertaking the writing of his paper so that, the committee appointed for this purpose, can suggest essential modifications and improvements if necessary. (*c*) The author, in his thesis must include complete references quoting the author, the name of the book and the year of its publication. (*d*) It is permissible for an Arabic and an English scholar to jointly produce a thesis in English which can be published in joint names.

5. Old Books shall not be eligible for consideration.

6. To qualify for a prize, special standard of literary merit and research work has been prescribed. The question whether any entry comes upto this standard and as such is eligible for the award of a Prize shall be decided by a Board whose appointment will be made by the Chairman of the Foundation. The decision of this Board shall be final and binding and beyond appeal in any Court of Law.

(*a*) The thesis approved for the grant of an award, will be suitably amended by the author in the light of the remarks and comments made by the judge of the thesis before this is published. (*b*) Such an amended copy will be submitted for record to the Foundation Office.

7. It is not at all a compulsive obligation to award all these prizes every year. If in any year entries do not measure upto the standard in any division, no award of prizes will be made that year.

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8. The copy-right of the prize winning thesis will belong to author, the Foundation shall have the right to publish one third of the thesis as its excerpt and if the author concerned does not puolish his prize-winning work in three years the copy-right thereof shall pass on to the Foundation.

9. (*a*) If the printing and publication of an article be under the consideration of the Foundation and its author insists on grant of suitable royalty, the Foundation shall give due regard to the request i.e. the payment of royalty for the publication of a thesis is not outside the bounds of possibility. (*b*) If a writer is not in a position to publish his thesis and if its publication is, in the opinion of the Foundation, in the interests of the Movement, the Foundation will make necessary arrangements. The authors shall submit at least two bound copies each of their works to the Office of Foundation.

10. It is upto an author to determine the category or division for his entry under anyone of the above mentioned five categories of topics. He may however consult the Chairman of the Foundation in this behalf. The title of the approved thesis will be reconsidered before its publication for any possible amendment.

11. It is for the chairman of the Foundation to decide as to which of the said categories covers an entry or whether it is not covered by any category and his decision in this respect shall be final and binding.

Secretary,
Fazl-e-Umar Foundation, Rabwah.

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(تلخیص حدیث نبوی)

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15th Fazle Omar Darsul Quran Class

Among various programmes which the Central Organization of the Ahmadiyya Community has launched in order to propagate the word of Allah - the Holy Quran, the one gaining more and more momentum both at the Centre Rabwah and in the branch communities is the Fazle Omar Darsul Quran class. Under the auspicious of *Nizarat-e-Isla'o Irshad* it is annually held at Rabwah, attracting young as well as old students, both male and female, it constitutes the most prominent feature at the Ahmadiyya Headquarters, every year, during thc summar vacation. Although all local educational institutions are closed, streets of Rabwah swarm with teenagers, all with Quran in their hands marching along their alloted avenues - boys on one side and girls on the other side towards Masjid Mubarak or Ewan-e-Mahmood (Mahmood Hall), the two places where the Quran classes are held - the former for the senior students, the latter for the junior ones.

This year's class, the 15th of its series, was held from 10th to 24th July 1979. The Convener of the class Maulwi F. I. Anwari, Additional Nazir Islaho Irshad has provided us with the following information:

This class provided two different courses (a) For youngsters, educationally under Matric, and (b) For grown ups, with educational qualifications above Matriculation.

A team of efficient teachers, mostly highly qualified scholars and Ulemas of the community, spent their precious hours in imparting education, the teaching of the Holy Quran occupying major part of the Syllabus. Other subjects taught were the Hadith, Ahmadiyya History and Literary work of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. An Arabic course for the beginners was also introduced in order to pave the way for understanding the Book of Allah. Apart, twelve learned scholars delivered speeches on topics concerning important issues of religions, social, moral and spiritual interest.

An evening Seminar, held daily in the Hasan Iqbal Mosque, provided information on various subjects like Ahmadiyya Missionary Activities abroad, important historical events of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Nizam-e-

Wasiyyat (The institution of Will) etc.

Separate accomodations were provided for about 360 male students and an equal number of female students, each furnished with proper lodging facilities. A team of Organizers, helpers and tutors were at work to provide them maximum comfort and care. Female guest students, under the able and scholarly attention of the President of the Central Lajna Ima Allah, Hazrat Maryam Siddiqa Sahiba, accomodated in their specially built guest house, felt quite at home during their stay.

An outstanding feature of this fortnightly class was the performance of congregational Tahajjud prayers at both guest houses. It offered a unique spiritual experience for all the participants, getting up as early as 3 a.m. every day and supplicating with their Lord, the Almighty Allah, when most people are enjoying their sound sleep.

Started in 1964 with meagre enrollment of 72 students, all male, this class, under the direct patronage and guidance of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih, is gaining strength every year. Last year, a total number of 1355 students - 525 male and 830 female, were registered. This year's enrolment swelled from 1355 to 1582. More or less 190 Ahmadiyya Communities from all over Pakistan were represented.

The closing ceremony of the class which took place in the morning of 24th July, turned into a very happy event of the fortnight.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III, who was away from Rabwah for the last few weeks, had returned to the Headquarters only a day beofre. He graciously accepted to bless the ceremony with his presence. A large number of Rabwahites also flocked to Masjid Mubarak to listen to their beloved Imam. In his address which continued for more than half an hour, Huzoor reiterated that it is only the Holy Quran which represents a just solution for the multifarious problems facing the poor and downtrodden people of the world. He announced that the day of the supremacy of Islam had dawned and hoped that a great majority of the non-Muslims shall soon enter the fold of Islam. He advised the Ahmadiyya youth to fully prepare themselves to shoulder the responsibilities which lay ahead for teaching the people who are to join Islam in multitudes Advising the Ahmadiyya youth, Huzoor emphasised that they should make special effort towards learning the meanings of the Holy Quran. Huzoor, continuing his speech told the Ahmadiyya youth that if they ever find any difficulty to understand any portion of the Holy Quran they should feel free to write to him. They will receive a prompt reply. Huzoor said that

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the Holy Quran is the perfect guidance for the mankind. Huzoor challenged that any one may come forward with any teaching pertaining to virtue or morals taught by any great philosophers or moralists of the world, he would trace its better from the Holy Quran which will establish that the Quranic explanation is so comprehensive that no human mind could have aspired of it.

With his address the two weeks class was concluded and Hazrat led the final prayer and graciously permitted the participants to leave for their respective homes.

Ramazan-ul-Mubarak at Rabwah

It is mentioned in the traditions that at the commencement of the month of the Ramazan the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him)used to gird himself up for it. He has been addressed *Mudassir* in the Holy Quran, which literally means one who is always ready for the battle. He used to pray to God that he may be spared of laziness and lethargy. Hazrat Aisha says that although it was Holy Prophet's normal routine to spend his day in supplication and get up in latter part of the night for *Tahajjud* prayers but during the month of Ramazan it appeared as if he is ready to embark upon a journey ; not a single moment was lost. He was extremely generous. He used to say that God bestows and I dispense. He never refused a request but during Ramazan his dispensation reached the proportion of a hurricane.

During Ramazan the Khuddams of Rabwah try to live up to his example. Although various organisations of the community remain active throughout the year in making people conscious of the blessing of prayers in congregation, the recitation of the Holy Quran and the study of religious books. The younger generation makes copious use of the Khilafat Library as well and the general character of the Centre is academic and full of spirituality but during the month of Ramazan the atmosphere appears to be charged with spirituality and the air laden with scent of supplication. The days and nights are filled with prayers, invocations and lectures on the Holy Quran and the Hadith. The *Taravih* prayers are held in more than twenty mosques which are attended by a large number of men, women and children. After the Asar prayers lectures are held on the Holy Quran and its exegesis. After *Fajar* prayers lectures are imparted on Hadith. Almost everyone

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completes one reading of the .Holy Quran during the Ramazan. Today when it is the tenth of Ramazan, a little girl told me that she has already completed two rounds of the recitation of the Holy Quran. Prayers are full of ardour and eyes wet with tears. The other day in the mosque when a little girl heard her mother crying in her prayers, she ran from one lady to another enquiring why her mother was crying, had she been hurt? How could she comprehend that her mother was humble prattle with her Lord and Master and crying in her love and trembling in His Majesty!

During the last days of Ramazan, there would not be a single mosque where the secluders (معتکف) would not be asking their God for forgiveness and peace. How touching and sublime the scene is. Once I heard a young man from a wealthy family of Frontier Province who was one of the secluders, bitterly crying his heart out. When he calmed a little I asked him the reason for it and if I could share his grief. He told me how simple he is that he is trying to hold God within these sheets around him. He was not proud of his worship but was just feeling humble of his attempts.

The atmosphere of supplications one finds in Rabwah is unique. This is because of the teaching and training of the Promised Messiah that prayers and supplications are the essence of religion. A child preparing for examination, a man in trouble, a woman in difficulty are all praying and requesting the elders, the pious, the Godly and each other to pray for them. To them what matters is the succour of God Almighty.

A Japanese who once visited Rabwah during Ramazan was completely overwhelmed at the sight of the secluders tearing their hearts out in prayers and supplications that he was literally stunned. He admitted that he had never seen such devotion in prayers anywhere and he will never forget the sight as long as he lives.

The month of Ramazan in Rabwah is an unforgettable experience.

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